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## Action Item

### *Professional Services Committee*

#### Update on Accreditation Review Activities

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**Executive Summary:** In December 2002, the Commission took action to focus accreditation activities on (a) the initial accreditation of programs under the new SB 2042 standards, and (b) conducting a review of the whole accreditation system. As a result of this action, site visits for all institutions seeking continuing accreditation except those pursuing accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) were postponed through June 2004. On January 22, 2004 the Committee on Accreditation (COA) took action to recommend that the Commission suspend all non-NCATE accreditation visits for an additional state fiscal year (2004-05). This item provides background and information about the potential impact of this action. Staff will also present an oral update on the work of the COA with respect to the accreditation review process to date.

**Recommended Action:** That the Commission suspend all non-NCATE accreditation visits during state fiscal year 2004-05 (July 2004 through June 2005).

**Presenters:** Larry Birch, Administrator for Accreditation, and Cheryl Hickey, Consultant, Professional Services Division



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## Update on Accreditation Review Activities

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### Introduction

In December 2002, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing took action to focus accreditation activities on initial accreditation of programs under the new SB 2042 standards, thus suspending site visits for all institutions seeking continuing accreditation except those pursuing accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The purpose of this action was to enable institutions to fully implement the SB 2042 standards and to enable the Commission to conduct a review of the accreditation system.

On January 22, 2004, the Committee on Accreditation (COA) took action to recommend that the Commission suspend all non-NCATE accreditation visits for another state fiscal year (2004-05) in order to continue a comprehensive review of its accreditation policies and lay the groundwork for necessary adjustments in the system. Staff will provide an oral update to the Commission on recent COA activities regarding the accreditation review.

### Background

The Commission postponed all non-NCATE accreditation visits for the spring of 2003 and the entire 2003-04 state fiscal year in order to allow full implementation of the new SB 2042 teacher preparation standards and to conduct a review of the accreditation system. Subsequent to this action, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) submitted a final report on its three-year evaluation of the *Accreditation Framework* and the review of the accreditation system was launched.

The COA received and began working through the AIR report in the summer of 2003, leading to the Commission's initial discussion about the scope of the accreditation review in December 2003. During this period of focused activity, all 84 sponsors of teacher preparation programs submitted initial responses to the SB 2042 standards. Many of these institutions have also responded to the new Pupil Personnel Services Standards, which were adopted in 2001. For the foreseeable future, new subject matter standards and new standards for the Administrative Services Credential, adopted in 2003, will keep many sponsors of educator preparation programs engaged in program development.

In summary, while site visits have been suspended, a great deal of accreditation activity has been underway with the sponsors of preparation programs responding to a wide range of new standards. The timing of this review coincides with a significant state budget crisis; hence suspension of accreditation site visits also provides, fortuitously, some relief for the agency's budget during the current 2003-04 fiscal year. The COA is recommending that the Commission continue its suspension of non-NCATE visits through fiscal year 2004-05, which will facilitate

the review of the accreditation system and provide continued budgetary relief during this time of fiscal uncertainty.

When the Commission took action to focus on the initial accreditation of institutions under the SB 2042 standards, institutions scheduled for visits during spring 2003 and during fiscal year 2003-04 (July 2003 through June 2004) were informed that visits to those campuses would be postponed by at least two years. All sponsors of educator preparation programs were further informed that the master schedule for site visits would likely be revised pending the outcome of the accreditation review. A revised master schedule has not yet been developed. Therefore, the institutions seeking initial or continuing NCATE accreditation are the only institutions that have prepared for visits in fiscal year 2004-05. Staff expects that, during the course of the accreditation review, the issue of scheduling will be addressed and brought to the Commission for consideration in time to provide adequate notice to institutions scheduled for site visits after 2004-05 (commencing July 2005).

The following table lists institutions that are now scheduled for merged accreditation visits in state fiscal year 2004-05, the accreditation visits that will be suspended pending Commission action, and the costs and savings that will be experienced during 2004-05 should the Commission take this action. Financing accreditation in the future is one of the issues that will be fully considered during the accreditation review.

| <b>NCATE Institutions</b>  | <b>Estimated Costs</b>   |
|--|--------------------------|
| Sonoma State University  | \$13,500                 |
| CSU Los Angeles  | \$16,000                 |
| CSU Dominguez Hills  | \$16,000                 |
| University of San Diego  | \$12,000                 |
| <b>Total Estimated Costs:</b>  | <b>\$57,500</b>          |
| <b>Non-NCATE Institutions Previously Scheduled for COA visits in 2004-05</b> | <b>Estimated Savings</b> |
| Biola University   | \$9,600                  |
| CSU Sacramento   | \$16,000                 |
| Christian Heritage College   | \$9,600                  |
| Fresno Pacific College   | \$13,500                 |
| John F. Kennedy University   | \$9,600                  |
| National Hispanic University   | \$9,600                  |
| Saint Mary's College   | \$13,500                 |
| Santa Clara University   | \$13,500                 |
| UC Berkeley  | \$13,500                 |
| UC Santa Barbara   | \$13,500                 |
| University of LaVerne  | \$16,000                 |
| Whittier College   | \$13,500                 |
| <b>Total Estimated Savings</b>   | <b>\$151,400</b>         |

### **Update on Accreditation Review Activities**

During its January 2004 meeting, the Commission directed staff to work with the Committee on Accreditation (COA) and interested parties to ensure a consultative and inclusive process for reviewing and revising the existing accreditation system for educator preparation in California. Between the February and March 2004 meetings of the Commission, a subcommittee of the COA and the full COA will have met to discuss options for a work plan and to further define issues and areas that need to be investigated during the review. During the March 25, 2004 Commission meeting, staff will provide an oral update on these two meetings.

